

GENERATING CENTRE ASSESSED GRADES (Stage 2): REVIEWING SUBJECT GRADING AND RANKING JUDGEMENTS

ALL TEACHING STAFF

1 - BACKGROUND

All teaching staff have received a copy of these instructions via email, as well as the Ofqual document *GUIDANCE Summer 2020 grades for GCSE, AS and A-level, Extended Project Qualification and Advanced Extension Award in maths / Information for Heads of Centre, Heads of Department/subject leads and teachers on the submission of centre assessment grades. Updated 22 May 2020*

- **All teaching staff** are responsible for verifying to their Subject Leader that they have checked their class data in the light of the Ofqual guidance and made adjustments, as required.
- **Subject Leaders** check and adjust subject centre assessed grades, with support from their LT line Manager and Faculty Leader.
- **Subject Leaders** must complete the **Department sign-off, as described on Page 17 of the Ofqual document**, noting the instructions regarding staff who 'might have a personal interest in a candidate'. The second person to complete the department sign-off should be the subject teacher who has assisted in the review process. In small departments or where there is no one in the department with this responsibility, MBR will be the 'second person' to sign off the subject's centre assessed grades. Subject Leaders will verify to MBR, FMI, LSQ /cc LT line manager + Faculty Leader that the department sign-off has been completed.
- **Leadership Team line managers** work with their Subject and Faculty Leaders on the Subject-level review and are responsible for verifying to MBR, as Head of Centre, that the checking process and department sign-off has been completed in their Faculty and, to the best of their knowledge, the estimated grades for students *reflect a fair, reasonable and carefully considered judgement of the most likely grade a student would have achieved if they had sat their exams this summer and completed any non-exam assessment*.
- **MBR as Head of Centre**, must complete **the Head of Centre sign-off, as described on Page 17 of the Ofqual document**.

The school has adopted the principles and practice of the Ofqual guidance in reviewing the grading and rank order judgements in the following ways:

22.5.20: FFT analysis of early data input/Areas for review highlighted.

22.5.20: Upload of completed Year 11 data for FFT analysis.

22.5.20 – 27.5.20: Clerical check of Year 11 and Year 13 data input.

28.5.20: ALPS analysis of Year 13 data input.

29.5.20 – 31.5.20: Return of FFT analysis of Year 11 data/Areas for review highlighted.

1.6.20 – 4.6.20: Subject-level review of Year 11 and Year 13 data input/Department sign-off.

5.6.20 – 9.6.20: LT review of Year 11 and Year 13 data input.

10.6.20 – 12.6.20: Data upload to examination boards.

2 – REVIEW CRITERIA: All staff

All teaching staff should read the Ofqual ‘Guidance’ document (22.5.20) and note, in particular, the information below. The school will explain to students and parents that teaching staff reviewed their grading and ranking judgements by implementing the practical guidance in these extracts. **Page 5 – 7: Agreed access arrangements / special consideration requests; Page 9: Objectivity in grading and ranking decisions; Page 10: Unconscious effects on objectivity; Page 11: Reviewing judgements**

Page 4: *The centre assessment grades submitted to exam boards must reflect a fair, reasonable and carefully considered judgement of the most likely grade a student would have achieved if they had sat their exams this summer and completed any non-exam assessment. Heads of Centre should emphasise the need for judgements to be objective and fair (see the section ‘The importance of objectivity’).*

Pages 5 – 7: Centre assessment grades

These should be a holistic professional judgement, balancing the different sources of evidence. Teachers and heads of department/subject leads will have a good understanding of their students’ performance and how they compare to other students within the department/subject this year, and in previous years. We want heads of department/subject leads and teachers to consider each student’s Summer 2020 grades for GCSE, AS and A level, Extended Project Qualification and Advanced Extension Award in maths performance over the course of study and make a realistic judgement of the grade each student would have been most likely to get if they had taken their exam(s) in a subject and completed any non-exam assessment this summer. This could include U (ungraded).

In coming to this holistic judgement, centres should assume that it is no easier or harder for a student to achieve a particular grade this year, compared to previous years.

For GCSE combined science, the centre assessment grade should use the 17-point grade scale from 9-9 to 1-1.

Teachers should draw on existing records and available evidence (as far as possible in the context of current public health advice). It is important that the judgements are objective, and they should only take account of evidence about student performance. This will include the following, where it is available:

- Records of each student’s performance over the course of study in each subject, including for example progress review data, classwork, bookwork, and/or participation in performances in subjects such as music, drama and PE
- Performance on any non-exam assessment (NEA), even if this has not been fully completed. You should not ask students to complete their NEA work and you do not need to submit marks for any completed NEA. But you will need to bear in mind that many students achieve a higher grade on their NEA than in their exams, so you should not base your judgment on NEA alone. You should balance it with your judgement about their likely performance in the written paper(s), where appropriate. In case students decide that they want to enter in a subsequent exam series, you should retain any NEA work completed to date
- For re-sitting students, any information about previous grades achieved or NEA marks that would, under normal circumstances, have been carried forward
- For A level students who took AS in 2019, their AS results in that subject
- Performance on any class or homework assessments and mock exams taken over the course of study
- Tier of entry in tiered subjects – centre assessment grades must reflect the tier of entry (9 to 3 for higher tier; 5 to 1 for foundation, as well as U)
- Previous results in your centre in this subject – these will vary according to a number of factors, including prior attainment of the students, but our data shows that for most centres any year-on-year variation in results for a given subject is normally quite small
- The performance of this year’s students compared to those in previous years
- Any other relevant information

Where disabled students have an agreed reasonable adjustment (for example a reader or scribe), or other students have an *agreed access arrangement*, the judgement should take account of likely achievement with the reasonable adjustment/access arrangement in place.

Special consideration requests, in the event that a student is unable to take an assessment or suffers a traumatic event that might affect their performance, will not apply this summer because students will not be taking their exams. Instead judgements should reflect how the students would have performed under ordinary circumstances. Where illness or other personal circumstances might have temporarily affected performance, for example in mock exams, centres should bear that in mind when making their judgements.

Given the timing of the announcement, we recognise that centres will have incomplete evidence, and that the range and amount of evidence will vary between different subjects. Judgements should be made on the evidence that is available.

There is no requirement to set additional mock exams or homework tasks for the purposes of determining a centre assessment grade and no student should be disadvantaged if they are unable to complete any work set after schools were closed. Where additional work has been completed after schools and colleges were closed on 20 March, Heads of Centre should exercise caution where that evidence suggests a change in performance. In many cases this is likely to reflect the circumstances and context in which the work is done.

There will be no requirement to send any supporting evidence, such as student work, to the exam boards, but centres should retain records of this, in case exam boards have any queries about the data.

Please note that these centre assessment grades are not the same as:

- Age related grades (usually defined as the grade a student would receive if they took the GCSE, AS or A level now)
- Working at grades (the grade a student is currently working at)
- Target grades (often set a little higher than likely to be achieved, to motivate students)
- Predicted grades provided to UCAS in support of university applications

Page 8 – 9 A rank order of students within each grade, for each subject

The statistical standardisation process will require a more granular scale than grades alone. For this reason, centres will be asked to provide a rank order of students within each grade for each subject. For example, if you have 15 students for GCSE maths for whom you have given a centre assessment grade of 5, you should then rank them from 1 to 15, where 1 is the most secure/highest attaining, 2 is the next most secure and so on.

Page 9: Objectivity in grading and ranking decisions

Each centre assessment grade should be a holistic professional judgement, balancing different sources of evidence and data. It is important that the centre's grading and ranking judgements are objective; they should only take account of existing records and available evidence of a student's knowledge, skills and abilities in relation to the subject. This evidence should inform teachers' professional judgements about each student's likely performance at the time of the exam. Other factors should not affect this judgement, including characteristics protected under equalities legislation such as a student's sex, race, religion/belief, disability status, gender reassignment or sexual orientation⁶. Similarly, judgements should not be affected by a student's behaviour (both good and poor), character, appearance or social background, or the performance of their siblings.

⁶ Protected characteristics also include age, marital / civil partnership status, pregnancy and maternity status.

Page 10: Unconscious effects on objectivity

To avoid unconscious bias, centres are urged to reflect on and question whether they may have any preconceptions about each student's performance and whether their perception of the evidence might be affected by any irrelevant factors. Centres should be aware of:

- Confirmation bias, for example noticing only evidence about a student that fits with pre-existing views about them
- Masking or halo effects, for example a particular view about an aspect of a student hides, or overly accentuates, their actual knowledge, skills and abilities
- Recency effects, for example giving undue weight to the most recent interaction with a student or the most recent piece of work done by a student
- Primacy effects, for example giving undue weight to 'first impressions' of a student
- Selective perceptions, for example giving undue weight to a student's performance on a particular part of the content of the specification rather than considering performance across all the material
- Contrast effects, for example over-estimating a student's likely performance having first considered a large number of students who are all at a much lower standard Information from previous data.

Page 11: Reviewing judgements

Having considered possible unconscious effects on objectivity and any information from available data from previous years, centres are asked to use this information to reflect carefully on their grading and ranking judgements. Dialogue between heads of department/subject leads, teachers and the Heads of Centre can support such reflection and review.

Where any possible unconscious effects, or previous systemic under- or over prediction for particular groups, have been identified, careful consideration would be needed to ensure, for example, that this was not over-compensated for.

Nonetheless, analysing information, reflection and dialogue as outlined above could help a centre to assure itself that it has effectively fulfilled its duties to promote equality and avoid discrimination as set out under the Equality Act 2010, and to assure itself that it has maximised objectivity and fairness in the judgements that it has made.

Page 15 – 16: Sharing data with students, parents and carers

Students, parents and carers will want to know that the process of generating centre assessment grades is rigorous, objective and fair. We have published a message for students and parents/carers that Heads of Centre may wish to circulate.

Centres must not, under any circumstances, share the centre assessment grades nor the rank order of students, or the endorsement grades for GCSE English language and A level biology, chemistry, geology and physics, with students, or their parents/carers or any other individuals outside the centre, before final results have been issued.⁸ This is to protect the integrity of teachers' judgements, and to avoid teachers, heads of department/subject leads, senior leaders or Heads of Centre being put under pressure by students and parents to submit a grade that is not supported by the evidence. Since the final grades for some or all students in a centre could be different from those submitted, it also helps to manage students' expectations.

Data subjects (students) are able to request their personal data under Article 15 of the General Data Protection Regulation. In the event that centres receive requests for personal information used to award grades this year, prior to results being issued, the Information Commissioner's Office has confirmed that exemption under Schedule 2, paragraph 25 of the Data Protection Act 2018 will apply. More information on this exemption and what this means can be found on its website at: <https://ico.org.uk/global/data-protection-and-coronavirus-information-hub/examscript-exemption/>

3 - REVIEW OF CENTRE ASSESSED GRADES (CAGs) AND SUBJECT RANK ORDER

The standardisation model use by examination boards will draw on the following sources of evidence: historical outcomes for each centre; the prior attainment (Key Stage 2 or GCSE) of this year's students and those in previous years within each centre; and the expected national grade distribution for the subject given the prior attainment of the national entry. For AS/A levels, the standardisation will consider historical data from 2017, 2018 and 2019. For GCSEs, it will consider data from 2018 and 2019, except where there is only a single year of data from the reformed specifications.

Standardisation is at subject level: not school, nor student. The standardisation formula will be done on a subject-by-subject basis. It means that **subject performance should remain broadly the same as in the last two/three years**. Ofqual acknowledge that all centres should expect to see some change to their Centre Assessed Grades.

The Review process combines adjustment at student-level and subject-level. Subject Leaders and LT line managers have detailed information about their subject's centre assessed grades and the areas requiring adjustment. The checking process runs as follows: Clerical review → Student-level review → Subject-level review → School-level review.

STUDENT LEVEL REVIEW

- Is the student's academic performance *plausible* given KS2/GCSE prior attainment?
- Does the grade fit the general trend of the student's academic profile (when compared to performance in other written or practical subjects)?
- Is the rate of improvement *plausible*, given Spring PU attainment data?

CAG v target grade

- Are CAGs broadly in line with school expectations?

CAG v special circumstances

Do subject estimated grades account for students' **access arrangements** (use of a laptop, Reader or Scribe) and/or **special examination consideration** (due to personal trauma or illness or other hindrance of performance in examination conditions)?

- Access arrangements for students are noted in the [SEN list](#) available in SharePoint → Staff dashboard → Oasis. In terms of access arrangements: "*the judgement should take account of likely achievement with the reasonable adjustment/access arrangement in place*".
- In terms of special consideration: "*judgements should reflect how the students would have performed under ordinary circumstances*".

Keep these questions in mind as you resolve CAG queries.

Ask yourself: Is this grade a *plausible* estimation of performance?

Is the estimated grade reliably based on moderated and standardised work in your subject e-portfolio? Can this student's academic performance be reliably compared to the academic performance of students who attained this grade, last year? Has specimen work from the examination board been considered in allocating this grade? Has the grade descriptor been checked in the subject specification or its supporting material?

Ask yourself: Is this grade a *plausible* improvement in the given timescale?

Friday 20th March: school closes. All work on examination preparation finishes.

Monday 11th May: Year 11 Study Leave begins/GCSE and A-Level written examinations start - a total of five teaching weeks from the time of school closure until Year 11 Study Leave.

- Is the estimated improvement plausible in terms of *five weeks* of targeted teaching and revision in school?
- Is the estimated rate of improvement plausible in this timescale, given the Spring Progress Update input?
- Is it plausible that a student's academic performance would improve by two whole GCSE grades in *five weeks*? It is the case in previous years many students *secure* their Spring PU grade, rather than improve it, significantly.
- Is it plausible for a student's academic capacity to decrease in *five weeks*? Academic performance may change but cognitive ability is unlikely to do so.

SUBJECT LEVEL REVIEW – Subject Leader/LT Line Manager

Grade distribution for 2019 v CAG distribution for 2020

- Are grades for lower/middle/upper prior attainment broadly in line with the last two/three years?
- Analysis of the first input of Year 11 data. Is subject performance and grade allocation broadly in line with that of previous years?
- Analysis of the first input of Year 13 data. Is subject performance and grade allocation broadly in line with that of previous years?

SCHOOL LEVEL REVIEW - LT

LT analysis of school performance data based on 2020 CAG v 2019 actual performance.

CONFIRM SUBJECT RANK ORDER

Ofqual has highlighted the importance of the subject rank. The centre-assessed grades may be moved up or down, but the rank won't be changed. Subject Leaders will pay particular attention to students at the top and bottom of each grade, as these are the ones who are most likely to have their grades changed through standardisation.